

# AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING

February 23, 2010

## Farmers' Breakfast - Kelly's Restaurant

### Minutes

**Present:** Jaime Tidlund, Pat Wagner, Sally Fitz, Ruth Hazzard, Touria Eaton, and John Thibbits.

**Guests:** Joe and Sarah Swartz, Barbara Francis, Allen and Marilyn Wentworth, Beth Guenn, Diana Adair, Barbara Mitchell, Gene Wagner, Robert Adair, Bob Comings, Joe Waskiewiz, Paul Kosloski, Leslie Cox, Bob Fitz, Bill and Connie Gillen, Pauline Lannon, Otto Stein, Maryann Mitchell.

The meeting opened with introductions of those attending and the farms they were a part of.

Ruth opened the floor for ideas that people had, for things that they would like to see the Ag Com work on.

- Bill Gillen asked how he could hire young people. He is looking for young people who would like to work for \$10.00 an hour maximum and under the dollar amount that would require a tax form to be filled out.
- Candy Talley asked about farm stand security and what can be done, as she has had flowers stolen from her stand on numerous occasions. Someone suggested marking the price up to compensate and someone also mentioned having better cash boxes to better protect the money.
- Information on packaging – what are the regulations? For example eggs, do they have to be in cartons, do they have to be by the dozen, what are the rules for this.
- Bob Fitz talked about his 100,000 gallons of Town water he used for his crops, and wondered why he is getting charged \$435.00 for sewer for this water when none of it went into the sewer system. There should be some sort of a farm agreement with the Town.
- There needs to be a stronger connection with the Ag Com community and the farmers market it was felt that we need to have a stronger presence and help the farmers with any challenges they may be facing.
- We need to build a stronger connection with NOFA
- We need to educate people about farm vehicles and traffic
- There needs to be more marketing opportunities in Amherst for Amherst farmers so we can try to get more local food in the hands of consumers.
- It was thought that we need to try to play a role in getting the permit process for the drainage project on Meadow Street expedited.
- There needs to be a feasibility study done to try to get a permanent farmers market structure in town, this needs to be so there can be more year round marketing.
- Parking at the farmers market for vendors and customers
- We need to educate the public about the values of local agricultural
- We need to promote to the town what we value or want.